

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health & Human Services, my name is Sara Schrag, and I live in Brunswick. I'm writing to urge you to support LD 143 An Act to Improve Women's Health and Economic Security by Funding Family Planning Services, because access to family planning services has granted me access to educational opportunities.

This care has allowed me to plan my life in a way that would not otherwise be possible. When I was in high school, I went on birth control medication to treat painful periods and cramps that often made it difficult to make it through the school day. This treatment significantly reduced my pain. It also allowed me to focus on school and have an educational experience more similar to that of my peers who did not get periods. The birth control that I am currently on allows me to attend college and pursue my academic interests without the fear of becoming pregnant when I am not ready to be. It will also allow me to establish a career before I eventually have children.

If my community lost access to these healthcare services, female students at Bowdoin would not be able to control when they got pregnant. Gender affirming care would be interrupted. Students would not be able to test for STIs/STDs, including HIV, so they would be more likely to spread them.

If all people had access to these health services, it would decrease the number of unwanted pregnancies. It would grant all females more control over their lives, and allow them to pursue educational and career opportunities that might otherwise be unavailable. Individuals seeking gender affirming care would not have to travel for hours to receive that care. It would decrease the rates of STDs and STIs, because more people would test for them and be treated if, they were positive.

Funding access to this care should be prioritized because it empowers all people to have more control over what happens to their body.

Please vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 143.

Thank you,

Sara Schrag

Brunswick, ME